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The President's Daily Brief

4 December 1972

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Gough Whitlam, leader of Australia's newly elected Labor Party government, has reaffirmed the key role of the US alliance, but a review of US military and scientific installations is promised. *(Page 1)*

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General Secretary Brezhnev's visit to Hungary showed none of the discord that surfaced some months ago in Soviet-Hungarian relations. *(Page 3)*

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AUSTRALIA

Prime Minister-elect Whitlam made it clear over the weekend that the alliance with the US will remain the cornerstone of Australian foreign policy, but Labor Party spokesmen have promised to re-examine the agreements permitting US military and scientific installations in Australia.

It is clear that some party leaders, including prospective defense minister Barnard, are not well versed on the US facilities. Once they become fully informed on the benefits Australia derives from the installations, we believe the new government will conclude that they fit within the framework of the ANZUS treaty, the formal basis of the US alliance. Whitlam may seek a more independent position within the alliance, however.

The new administration will make some changes in the previous government's "forward defense" doctrine. Most immediately, it is likely to bring home the small training contingent left in Vietnam after the withdrawal of Australian combat forces last year. Whitlam has said that Australia will honor its commitments to Malaysia and Singapore under the five-power agreement with the US and New Zealand, but wants eventually to reduce the Australian military presence in Malaysia and Singapore to training and assistance missions arranged bilaterally.

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USSR

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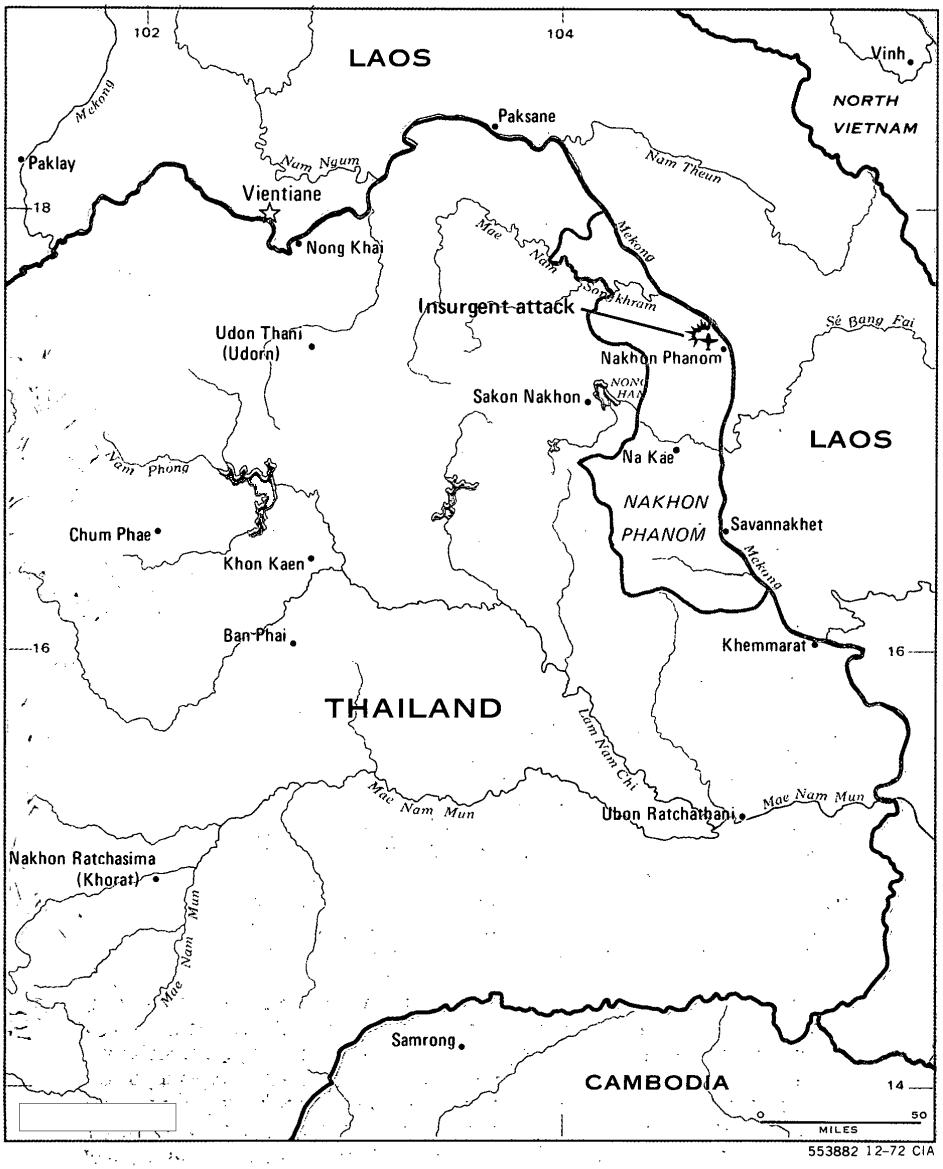

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NOTES

USSR-Hungary: General Secretary Brezhnev's visit to Hungary last week appears to have gone according to expectations with no signs of significant differences. With a bow to Hungary's special approach to some economic matters, such as its departures from centralized planning, the communiqué asserted the need for continued "reciprocal study and sharing of experiences." The absence of the discord that surfaced earlier in the year undoubtedly reflected Moscow's wish to avoid tensions in Eastern Europe when broader European negotiations are beginning. Romania is already asserting its independent role in the Helsinki talks.

Jordan: Foreign Minister Zayd hopes to exploit Syria's reopening of its borders with Jordan last Friday with quick moves to end Amman's diplomatic isolation in the Arab world. He intends to go to Damascus to urge restoration of diplomatic ties before the Arab defense ministers meet early next week, and plans to urge Cairo to do likewise. He also hopes that Kuwait will quickly agree to resume the subsidy cut off after Jordan expelled the fedayeen. The fedayeen, for their part, have remained notably silent on Syria's action, but however much they are hurt they will find it difficult to criticize their strongest supporter.

Thailand: Early yesterday morning Communists directed some small arms fire against Nakhon Phanom air base but caused no damage to US facilities or aircraft. This was the fifth such incident at US-tenanted air bases in Thailand this year, and the first at Nakhon Phanom. The action came on the heels of the first insurgent attack on a government district headquarters at Na Kae, some 30 miles to the south [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

The Communists presumably hope to disrupt the government's three-battalion counterinsurgency campaign launched in the province on Friday.

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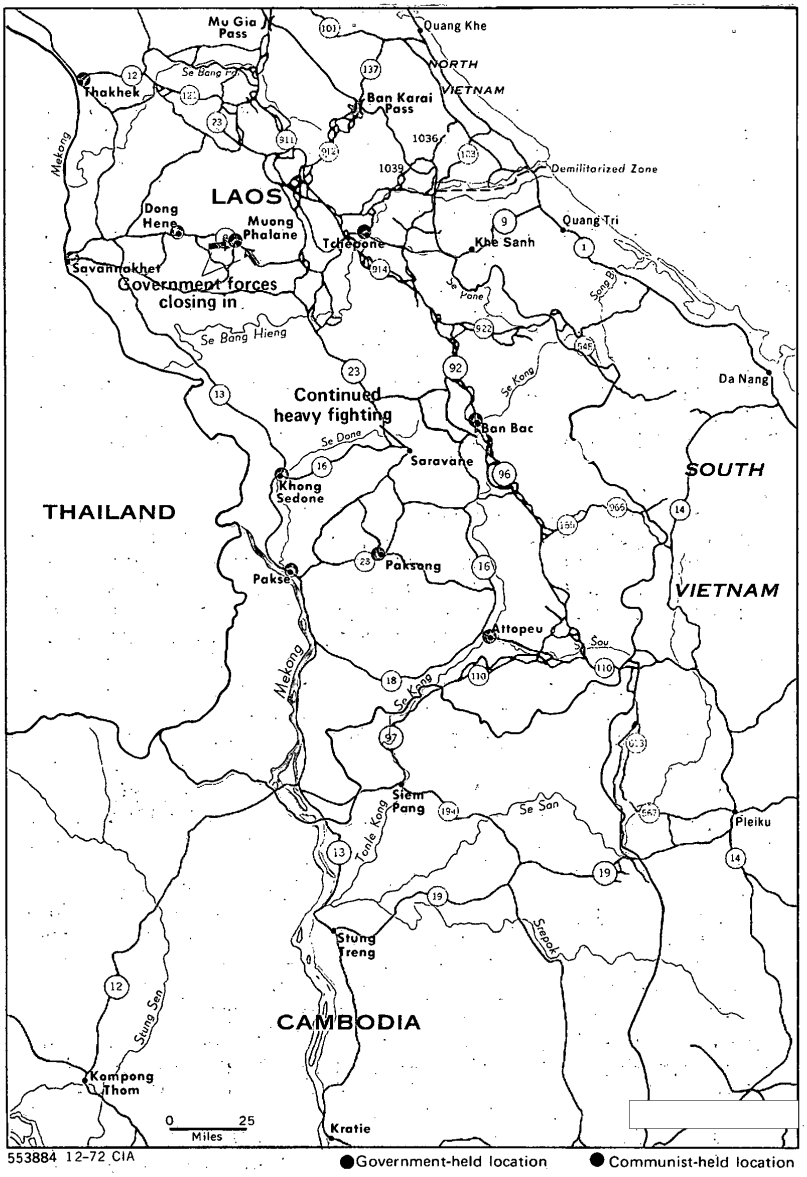

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Laos: Heavy fighting continued over the weekend in the panhandle. Government irregulars moved closer to Muong Phalane, but another government unit, situated along the western edge of the town, has been unable to move against the well-entrenched enemy in the center. Farther south, Communist forces maintained their hold on the northern part of Saravane, which they re-entered late last week.

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